

age. Those over the age of eighteen on February 28, 2001 were still required to apply for naturalization. *Id.* In May 2019, The Adoptee Citizenship Act of 2019 was introduced by Representative Adam Smith that would provide automatic citizenship to adults who:

(A) was adopted by a United States citizen before the individual reached 18 years of age;

(B) was physically present in the United States in the legal custody of the citizen parent pursuant to a lawful admission before the individual reached 18 years of age;

(C) never acquired United States citizenship before the date of the enactment of the Adoptee Citizenship Act of 2019; and

(D) was residing in the United States on the date of the enactment of the Adoptee Citizenship Act of 2019 pursuant to a lawful admission.

The Act would afford more limited rights to citizenship to certain adult adoptees living abroad. Unfortunately, GovTrack predicts the bill has a 3% chance of passing,¹²³ although the bill has bipartisan support.¹²⁴ This is truly unfortunate, as it is estimated that between 25,000 and 49,000 children adopted to the U.S. between 1945 and 1998 lack U.S. citizenship, causing some to face deportation and many to experience hurdles in obtaining student financial aid, drivers licenses, and passports as adults.¹²⁵

V. Adoption of Foreign-Born Children, Re-adoption of Children Adopted Abroad, and Recognition of Foreign Adoptions in Oklahoma State Courts

In the 1990s, Oklahoma passed legislation to facilitate the adoption and readoption of foreign adoptees in Oklahoma courts and the recognition of foreign adoption decrees. Although most foreign adoptees are adopted in their country of origin, some nations award custody to an adopting parent or an entity, such as an adoption agency representing the adopter, and the adoption is completed in a U.S. court. In fiscal year 2018, however, only 8% of the adoptions of children immigrating to the United States through intercountry adoption were finalized in the United States, and the adoption of only one of the 37 children who came to Oklahoma in FY

¹²³ See GovTrack, *H.R. 2731: Adoptee Citizenship Act of 2019*, at <https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/116/hr2731/text>;

¹²⁴ Susan Collins, *Senator Collins Joins Bipartisan Group in Introducing Adoptee Citizenship Act of 2019*, at <https://www.collins.senate.gov/newsroom/senator-collins-joins-bipartisan-group-introducing-adoptee-citizenship-act-2019> (June 3, 2019).

¹²⁵ Adam Smith, *Congressman Smith and Congressman Woodall Introduce Adoptee Citizenship Act of 2019*, at <https://adamsmith.house.gov/2019/5/congressman-smith-and-congressman-woodall-introduce-adoptee-citizenship-act-of-2019>.